

**CITY OF GROVE CITY, OHIO
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

SPECIAL MEETING

March 17, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m.

Chair Leasure noted a quorum was present and began the meeting with a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance. The following members were present: Mr. Gary Leasure, Chair, Mr. Chuck Boso, Mr. Roby Schottke, Ms. Julie Oyster. Mr. Mike Linder had an excused absence. Others present: Kyle Rauch, Community Development Officer, Stephen Smith, Frost Brown Todd; Mike Keller and Erik Meininger, EMH&T; Lt. Tammy Green, Jackson Township Fire Inspector; Laura Lanese, Councilwoman; Tami Kelly, Clerk of Council; Michele Boni, Planning Assistant, and Mary Havener, Development Assistant.

Item #1 – Beulah Park – Preliminary Development Plan

(PID #201503040011)

The applicant is requesting approval of a preliminary development plan for a mixed-use development on the former Beulah Park site containing a mixture of single-family and multi-family as well as commercial and recreational spaces. The plan meets the general principals outlined in the City's Beulah Park Conceptual Framework, adopted by City Council in 2014.

The proposed development would include both public and private aspects. Public aspects include parkland, roadway connections and a potential public recreation center. Private developments would be in the form of office/commercial and residential developments.

The proposed preliminary development plan has been submitted with the intent of rezoning the site to PUD-R (Planned Unit Development Residential) and PUD-C (Planned Unit Development Commercial) for the redevelopment of the site.

Mr. Rauch stated that the proposed development will have two points of access off Southwest Boulevard and two off of Demorest Road, as well as multiple connections to Park Street, Grant Avenue and Columbus Street. The proposed Columbus Street connection, to connect Beulah Park to the future Library site, will require the roadway to cross the CSX rail line. Any new rail crossing will require the approval of CSX.

The site is organized into a number of subareas including two single family subareas featuring a combined 275 single family lots, 120 detached empty nester residential lots, 26 acres for 450 multi-family residential units, 12 acres for commercial/office development, and a large public open space in the center of the site.

An existing stream (Republican Run) currently runs through and out of multiple portions of the site. The applicant is proposing to reroute the stream with this development so that it is contained solely within this site. Staff would like to see a trail system installed along the proposed relocated stream to create a trail network separated from the road network. Trail and sidewalk connectivity should be a focus to connect residents in the development to the Town Center as well as provide a safe connection for visitors in the Town Center to enjoy the amenities proposed with this development. Additionally staff noted that some concerns were raised with regards to ensuring adequate parking for the open space areas and stated those discussions and issues would be worked out as part of the final development plan process.

Staff has reviewed all eight findings and believe all are or can be met and recommended. Planning Commission makes a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Preliminary Development Plan as submitted, given various matters that would need to be addressed during the review of the final development plan.

Joseph Ciminello was present to speak on the proposed development and gave a brief presentation of the preliminary plan. He expressed his excitement for this project not only for the development itself, but for the impact it will have on the Town Center. He discussed in detail the composition and history of the site as well as the many attributes that this development would have to offer, i.e., single and multi-family homes, a park area for concert and sporting events, a potential recreation center, bike paths, and walking trails. He stated that the first thing they looked at when developing this plan was the connectivity to the Town Center, utilizing Grant and Park Street. A number of home builders looked at the site but could not see marketing a new neighborhood through an existing subdivision without a new main road. He also noted that with the investment of the City on the new library it became important to the success of the redevelopment plan of Beulah Park to get Columbus Street through to provide a vehicular connection but more importantly a visual and pedestrian connection. . Mr. Ciminello went into further detail regarding the positioning of the redevelopment on a center axis as well as promoting walkability and connectivity while controlling traffic through strategically locating traffic circles. Mr. Ciminello also noted the submission of two plans, one with and one without a community recreation center, stating that while a recreation center is not necessary as part of the redevelopment effort, it would be a positive addition for the

City of Grove City. Further information was presented on the plan aspects with and without the recreation center. He stated that he envisions bringing synergy back to the downtown area with a large amount of open space that can be used for concerts, sporting events and other outdoor activities. Mr. Ciminello noted that three-quarters of the 850 dwelling units located on the site area are within a half mile of the intersection of Broadway and Columbus Street making it a very walkable community. He noted that from a land use standpoint, there is a multiple family component geared to young professionals and empty nesters. A total of 120 detached single family units are aimed at empty nesters. The remainder would be single family homes located in two parts of the development. Mr. Ciminello briefly detailed the economic development tools and potential funding mechanisms, stating that they feel the numbers are there, but they will need to work closely with the City to make sure there are appropriate levels of commitments.

Chair Leasure asked for clarification on the extension of Columbus Street and the utilization of Cleveland Avenue. Mr. Ciminello confirmed that Columbus Street was going to be extended to Broadway not Cleveland Avenue. However Mr. Ciminello also clarified that the existing portion of Cleveland Avenue would be extended further west, through the current parking lot, in order to create home sites there.

Mr. Schottke raised the question that with the railroad crossings at Park and Grant, and another one when Columbus Street is brought through, what the difficulty will be of getting another crossing from the Railroad with the other two being so close. Mr. Ciminello stated that they are currently working with the City Administration on working this out and because the crossings are so close, he doesn't see this as an issue. Mr. Schottke also asked about the possibility of placing a pedestrian bridge over the tracks for families that will be living in the Beulah Park housing and want to walk or ride bikes over to the library or other areas near the Town Center. Mr. Ciminello acknowledged that as being a good suggestion and one that could be looked into.

Mr. Schottke commended Mr. Ciminello on his plans. He asked about the possibility of having an area within the park area for an equestrian event which could bring in additional revenue. Mr. Ciminello stated that they had looked into this and the existing open space would not accommodate that type of event. Mr. Schottke also applauded Mr. Ciminello on the various basketball/tennis courts that are in the plan as they are much needed in Grove City.

Mr. Schottke asked where the construction entrance would be located. Mr. Ciminello stated that they would use the signalized access located across from the Walmart Distribution Center. He will work with the City to determine which additional entrances would be best.

Mr. Schottke's followed up with a question as to whether or not there had been any conversations with the school district related to purchasing the Bus Compound to be able to develop in that area. Mr. Ciminello stated that until this proposed development happens it would be difficult to take on that particular project at this time. This opportunity could be revisited after the current plan is in development.

Ms. Oyster reiterated Mr. Schottke's interest in having pathways for children and asked if any bike trails were planned as opposed to having to use the street for gaining access to the Town Center. Mr. Ciminello stated that there would be bike paths and sidewalks integrated into the plan.

Ms. Oyster also asked about the housing for the empty nesters and multi-families and whether or not they would be brown-stone type buildings. Mr. Ciminello stated that it would not be possible for all of the homes to be brown-stone due to the density. Essentially the homes which are visible would be the ones most focused on key standards, which is not unlike the plans at the Pinnacle.

Chair Leasure inquired as to the price range for the single family homes. Mr. Ciminello stated that there would be different pricing levels, however, the smaller lots off of Grant and Park would be in the \$200,000 range. The homes closer into the subdivision would be \$300,000 plus depending on the location.

At this time, Chair Leasure opened the discussion up to the public.

Mr. Robert McGraw, a Grove City resident, introduced himself and submitted a letter to the Planning Commission recommending approval of the proposed plans.

Ms. Green of the Jackson Township Fire Department asked if the width of the roundabouts would be sufficient for emergency vehicles. Mr. Ciminello stated that they would be.

Mr. Schottke asked if Mr. Ciminello had a "plan B" if the Railroad denied the additional crossing. Mr. Stephen Smith, Frost Brown Todd, responded that the City is working with both the Railroad and Mr. Ciminello to pursue the additional crossing. He stated that this is a difficult process but is hopeful that it will be met with approval.

Mr. Schottke asked about a 2013 unreleased study that was done for a recreation center and whether the numbers fall in line with the proposed recreation center. Mr. Boso stated that they did. Mr. Schottke then asked if there was anything the City needed to do in this development to increase taxes. Mr. Boso stated that taking on the additional cost of a \$22 million dollar facility would require the City to look into new revenue, however, this is not a part of Mr. Ciminello's project. Mr. Schottke asked if we would need to increase taxes if the recreation center was not included. Mr. Boso stated that in these preliminary negotiations, he would not think it would be necessary. The philosophy of the City is that when we invest City funds, those funds invested come from the project itself and do not come from existing revenues within the City.

Chair Leasure asked the Fire Department if this new development would require the City to invest in additional equipment or a firehouse. Ms. Greene was unable to answer at this time. Mr. Ciminello stated that as the development gets underway, there should be funds available to accommodate additional services if needed.

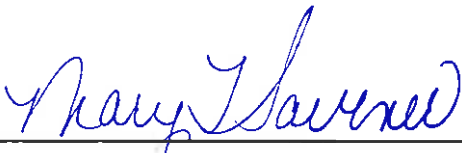
Councilwoman Lanese inquired as to whether there would be enough parking for all the amenities that the park would have to offer. Mr. Ciminello stated that parking should be sufficient. Ms. Lanese also asked why the project appeared so "residential heavy". Mr. Ciminello stated that after extensive study, they found that the way to revitalize a city is by bringing people back to the Town Center area. Rather than creating retail in the development, they choose to keep it within the Town Center within close proximity to where people live.

Resident Christine Houck asked at what point the City would go into more information related to the financial aspect of the development. Mr. Boso stated that it's the philosophy of the Administration and City Council that the investment the City puts into these projects come from the project itself and do not come from existing city funds. The funds related to the construction of Columbus Street would come from other funds within the City. All dollar amounts at this time still remain preliminary.

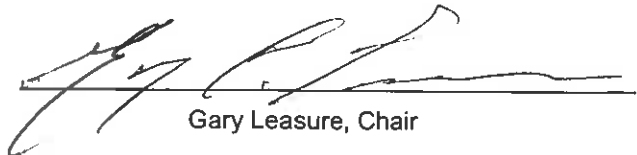
In other business, Mr. Boso introduced Mr. Terry Foegler, Campus Partners for Community Urban Redevelopment, who will partner with the City to assist with our strategic plans.

Being no further discussion, Mr. Schottke motioned to recommend the approval of the preliminary development plan to City Council as submitted. Ms. Oyster seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Having no further business, Chair Leasure adjourned the meeting at 2:35 p.m.



Mary Havener, Secretary



Gary Leasure, Chair